The Border Crossed Us

The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo annexed Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado, Utah, and parts of Wyoming to the United States. Mexicans living in these territories remained where they were and became U.S. citizens overnight. They did not cross the border, the border crossed them.

The lower Rio Grande Valley is a border region famous for rural musical styles like the story-telling corrido and the conjunto. In cities like Corpus Christi, Brownsville, McAllen, and Alice, these styles mixed with country-western, swing, and other music. By the 1970s, San Antonio emerged as the center of a Tejano music recording industry.

Many Tejano families traveled to harvest grapes in California, cherries in Washington, or beets in Michigan, and then returned home in winter. Migrant laborers introduced Tejano music styles in new places, and brought new music back home to Texas.